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¹¹ In that day the Lord will reach out His hand a second time to reclaim the surviving remnant of His people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the Mediterranean. ¹² He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; He will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.

¹³ Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's enemies will be destroyed; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, nor Judah hostile towards Ephraim. ¹⁴ They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia to the west; together they will plunder the people to the east. They will subdue Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites will be subject to them. ¹⁵ The Lord will dry up the gulf of the Egyptian sea; with a scorching wind He will sweep His hand over the River Euphrates. He will break it up into seven streams so that anyone can cross over in sandals. ¹⁶ There will be a highway for the remnant of His people that is left from Assyria, as there was for Israel when they came up from Egypt. ***Isaiah 11***

Isaiah having explained the nature of the perfect king and the purpose of the king's rule now explains there will be universal peace and reconciliation. We see a partial fulfilment of this is the church today, but Christ's return will finally achieve this ('in that day' v11). God personally acts (reaches out His hand) as He acted in the exodus of the people of God from Egypt. This will be an even greater work of God as -

- **People are gathered together** (v11-12) – here what was promised in verse 10 is given substance. None of the great powers of the day (Assyria, Babylon and Egypt) will be able to thwart the Lord's plans. No distance or remoteness can prevent this great gathering of the people of God together. In Matthew 24:31 we see that it is Jesus on His return that will fulfil this promise 'And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.' This great gathering reminds us that no one of God's people will be lost, this gives us encouragement in these days of distancing that it will not be forever.
- **God's people are reconciled** (v13-14) – God's people even under David had a fragile unity, here is one which is secure because all jealousy and hostility are things of the past and in Old Testament language we are told that this kingdom will extend to everywhere and will be triumphant (v14). We need to hold onto this truth in a world that is complex, confusing, and corrupt – it will not always be this way! Praise God!
- **God is the one who opens the way to His kingdom** (v15-16) – Using Exodus language Isaiah says that the mighty river Euphrates will dry up so God's people can safely be gathered and reach home. What power is at work - they would have been amazed by the idea of crossing the Euphrates in sandals – only the perfect (notice the number seven again) work of God makes this possible. The work of new creation is complete, and one people will live together in perfect harmony and in the presence of God.

Question:

How should the fact that we will become one united people affect our behaviour now?

Prayer

Lord, thank You for this glorious picture of what will happen when Jesus returns. Amen.